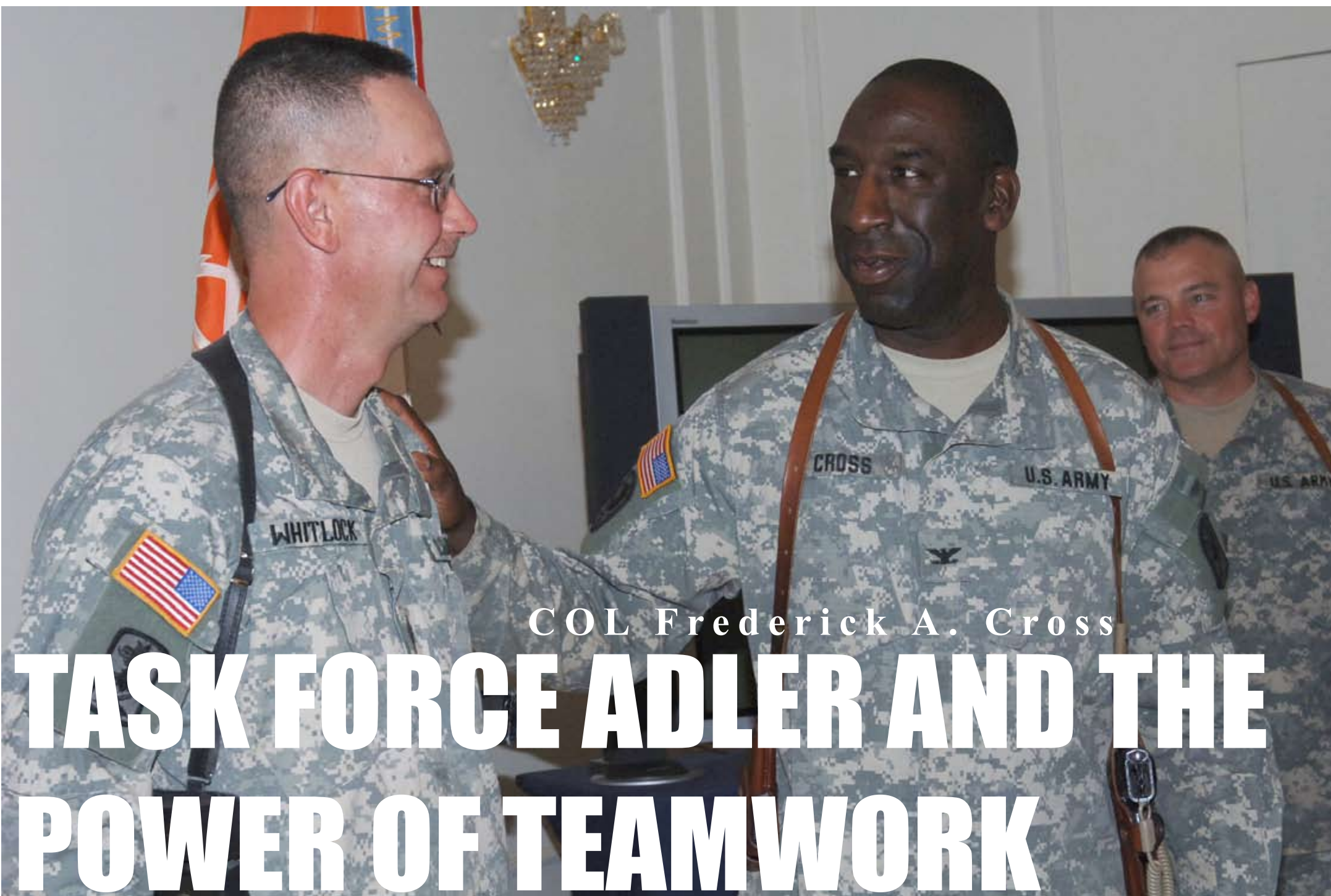




COMMERCIALIZING IRAQ THROUGH TEAMWORK

Task Force Adler Soldiers use teamwork, technology and old-fashioned hard work to bring the Signal Corps into the future.





COL Fredrick A. Cross

TASK FORCE ADLER AND THE POWER OF TEAMWORK

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to command, in my opinion, the best Signal Task Force in the history of the Army. I salute all the Soldiers and civilians of Task Force Adler who perform their mission day-in and day-out under the most extreme conditions and constant dangers and have made the difficult

jobs and tasks assigned seem easy to accomplish. This feat could only be accomplished by capitalizing on your tremendous Soldier skills, your technical abilities and extreme professionalism. Soldiers and leaders of this unique organization are simply performing in an outstanding manner.

As we realize each accomplishment and the great personal sacrifices of Soldiers, both past and present, I trust that in doing so each of us, for the right reason, carry a glimmer of hope that the contributions being made now will somehow take root and become a catalyst for a better future for all

the Iraqi people. I can assure you that as a unit, we are trying to be such an example. One day when the people of Iraq look back upon this part of their history, I can only hope that they are able to appreciate the valuable contributions you are making in enabling the spread of human rights and democracy.

As I look across the Iraqi theater of operation I can not help to notice how the entire communications team (Team Signal) has come together to build and strengthen the enterprise communications network. You have made tremendous strides across a broad front in a relative short period of time; from Soldier support initiatives, to network commercialization efforts, to optimizing routing architectures, and finally creating the Joint Network Control Center to manage communications across

provided to over 150 Soldiers on fiber optic splicing and repair; our Baghdad Signal University has provided relevant and quality professional instruction to more than 250 Soldiers in subjects such as basic networking, advance networking, Promina technology, and Voice over the Internet Protocol Call Manager; and many of you have conducted self-study to enhance your knowledge and capabilities. You have really made a difference.

We are in a period that is marked by change. In adapt-

Teamwork: COL Fredrick A. Cross appoints MSG Jerry Whitlock to First Sergeant of Headquarters Company, 22d Signal Brigade, putting Whitlock in charge of all enlisted matters for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 22d Signal Brigade.

the Iraqi Theater of Operation.

We have taken tremendous steps to leverage technology in the accomplishment of our mission... totally blurring the lines between what we once called tactical and strategic communications. But the leveraging of technology is only one part of the commercialization process; it also takes Soldiers, civilians and tremendous leadership to operate, maintain and manage the complicated communications puzzle we call the network. And it is my sincere belief that the only way that you could have accomplished what you have thus far is through continuous TEAMWORK.

During the process of getting the job done, you have made tremendous strides in the area of training to support the commercialization effort. You've taken advantage of the professional courses

ing to change we are often asked to do things that at first you may ask yourself, am I capable and prepared. But as time has shown, your flexibility and adaptability has proven invaluable and demonstrate your capability to think out-of-the-box to find solutions to issues. Some of the missions we are asked to accomplish require us to execute tasks that are sometime outside our perceived abilities or our military skill sets. Most asks require on-the-job training to accomplish, especially when utilizing commercial grade equipment taken directly from the vendor. As your commander, knowing you as I do, it is not surprising to me that you have responded as the professional corps of communicators I know you are. We are proud and ready to meet the challenges of the future through continuous TEAMWORK!



This is an exciting time to be a Soldier assigned to Task Force (TF) Adler. We are decisively engaged in the war on terror. Our Soldiers continue to combine the Warrior Ethos with initiative, decisiveness and the courage that is needed to succeed in the complex, often irregular environments of combat. Members of the Task

Force continue to travel across the country of Iraq to attend Fiber Training in classes at Balad, Baghdad and Tikrit. Our Baghdad Signal University (BSU) continues to train our Warriors in VoIP, Call Manager, basic networking and any other commercial off the shelf equipment that the task force continues to field for the support of

the Warfighter. Our Soldiers continue to stand point for our Army and our country. Task Force Adler Soldiers are not only busy commercializing a country; they stand guard on towers, pedestrian gates, and outside dining facilities. They perform duties as vehicle commanders, gunners, and/or team

chiefs on ground assault convoys. We have awarded Purple Hearts and Combat Action Badges. There is not a day that goes by that I am not extremely proud of the service of our warriors. As Soldiers, we read the newspapers and check the World Wide Web, and sometimes the newspapers only show the American people the worst events.

They don't see what's in a Soldier's heart or what he does on a daily basis to ensure the freedom of the Iraqi people. President Theodore Roosevelt once said: "It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best, knows

26 last year. The rise in suicides correlates with the increased stress levels and increased exposure to combat found during a recent assessment of the Force. Although exposure to combat and its associated stressors may not be prevented, many suicides can. Commanders and leaders must ensure each of their personnel feels like a valued member of the team, strongly promote the concept that buddies must help buddies, and support those seeking help to cope with stressful situations. The second area is Motorcycle Safety. As Soldiers depart on R and R and we prepare to redeploy, leaders

Band of Brothers: Command Sergeant Major Thomas J. Clark Stands with his fellow Task Force Adler Sergeants Major -- A team of warriors.

in the end the triumph of a high achievement; and who, at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat". The Soldiers of Task Force Adler are tested in the arena of Iraq every day. They stand at the tip of the spear and I'm proud to be a part of this team.

As Soldiers of Task force Adler, we must continue to do what's right, every time and all the time. I want to cover two areas that are potential deadly for our Soldiers. The first is Suicide. Thirty Service members killed themselves during the first year of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This number fell to 20 during the second year, but rose to

must emphasize to motorcycle owners that they should ensure that other drivers are properly licensed and trained prior to allowing them to operate their motorcycle. Leaders must remind Soldiers they are required to wear a DOT approved helmet on and off the installation. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation recommends a full-face helmet for maximum protection in the event they are involved in an accident. Remind Soldiers to use the buddy system and watch out for their fellow Soldiers. Don't let friends take unacceptable risks. Think Safety, we have worked too hard and traveled together to many miles to allow any of our Warriors to die senselessly.

A close-up photograph of a woman in a military uniform and sunglasses smiling, with a young girl in a red dress looking on. The woman's sunglasses reflect the scene around them. The background shows other children and a blue tarp.

Building a future

Throughout history, women have proven that they are capable of handling even the toughest of jobs with the highest of performance. Camp Victory Women's History Month celebration showcased both the historical accomplishments of women, as well as a number of successful role models for young Soldiers by SPC Michael Howard

1LT Randee Farrell poses with Iraqi Children in the midst of a relief project led by CH Dixie Behnken

It has often been said that behind every great man there is a great woman. Today, it’s no stretch to say that behind any great army, there is an army of great women - women refused to retreat, refused to surrender, and always stopped to open doors for other women as they were opening the door to freedom and peace, and building communities and dreams.

COL Michelle Miller, staff judge advocate for MNC-I, and guest speaker at At Camp Victory observance of Women’s History Month Friday the ceremony, provided a shining example of this behavior.

“Colonel Miller is an excellent role model to anyone who needs a mentor. She has pursued her dreams and achieved them, and it shows.” said Task Force Adler Equal



SFC Marjorie Irby, the Equal opportunity advisor for the 22d Signal Brigade, introduces guest speaker, Col. Michelle Miller.

Oppurtunity Adviser Marjorie Irby.

Miller confessed to the audience that the theme struck a chord with her as she had always been a huge dreamer. Even in her childhood, said Miller, she spent a lot of time dreaming and scheming about whatever was next, looking forward to what was going to lie ahead. Miller exhorted the truths of this year’s theme, Women: Builders of communities and dreams. “I thought a lot about this theme when I thought about what I was going to talk to you about tonight. I look out at all of you, and I think about this theme, builders of communities and dreams, in fact, we are, all of us in this room, in this command, builders of communities and dreams. In fact, I can’t find anything more appropriate to describe what we’re doing

1848 First women’s rights convention is held in Seneca Falls, New York. A set of 12 resolutions is adopted calling for equal treatment of women and men under the law and voting rights for women.

1869 May Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton form the National Woman Suffrage



Molly Pitcher at the Battle of Monmouth, 1778. www.historyplace.com

Association. The primary goal of the organization is to achieve voting rights for women by means of a Congressional amendment to the Constitution..

1919 The federal woman suffrage amendment, originally written by Susan B. Anthony and introduced in Congress in 1878, is passed by the House of Representa-

tives and the Senate. It is then sent to the states for ratification.

1920 The Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor is formed to collect information about women in the workforce and safeguard good working conditions for women.

The 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote, is signed into law by Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby.

1960 The Food and Drug Administration approves birth control pills.

1961 President John Kennedy establishes the President’s Commission on the Status of Women and appoints Eleanor Roosevelt as chairwoman. The report



issued by the Commission in 1963 documents substantial discrimination against women in the workplace and makes specific recommendations for improvement, including fair hiring practices, paid maternity leave, and affordable child care.

1963 Congress passes the Equal Pay Act, making it illegal for employers to



Col. Michelle Miller, Staff Judge Advocate, MNC-I., was the guest speaker at At Camp Victory observance of Women's History Month.

E O

ists. So as we recognize the male and female role models and leaders who have achieved so much, we realize that much of the world has a long way to go, and we realize that we, as proud Americans, and coalition partners, freedom loving people everywhere have a duty and a responsibility to help those less fortunate."

Everyone from communications specialists to admin clerks is making a difference in Iraq today, according to Miller. She let those in attendance know that they can all be proud of the fact that they are an important part of making this country and this world a better place. "Together we can help turn the Iraqi's shattered society into a stable community and we can turn their nightmares into hopeful dreams," she said. Throughout history, women have proven that they are capable of handling even the toughest of jobs with the highest of performance.

Camp Victory Women's History Month celebration showcased both the historical accomplishments of women, as well as a number of successful role models for young Soldiers.



SSG Floston Authur wheels the cake into the Women's History month celebration at Camp Victory.

here in Iraq. Each of us, each of you, is here in your own way, to help build these communities, and help make these dreams come true," said Miller

Miller noted that it was important not only to recognize the accom-

plishments of women in the free world, but also to spread that freedom to citizens of less fortunate countries.

"We're here to observe and celebrate the accomplishments of women as builders of communi-

ties and dreams, but think about the plight of many women here in Iraq. Here we have an entire population of women whose hopes for freedom and democracy and a better life are being crushed by terrorism and religious fundamental-

pay a woman less than what a man would receive for the same job. 1964 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act bars discrimination in employment on the basis of race and sex. At the same time it establishes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate complaints and impose penalties. 1966 The National Organization for Women (NOW) is founded by a group of feminists including Betty Friedan. The largest women's rights group in the U.S., NOW



seeks to end sexual discrimination, especially in the workplace, by means of legislative lobbying, litigation, and public demonstrations. 1970 In Schultz v. Wheaton Glass Co., a U.S. Court of Appeals rules that jobs held by men and women need to be "substantially equal" but not "identical" to fall under the protection of the Equal Pay Act. 1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments bans sex discrimination in schools. It states: "No person in the United States shall,

on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." As a result of Title IX, the enrollment of women in college sports increases dramatically. 1973 As a result of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court establishes a woman's right to abortion. 1976 The first marital rape law is enacted in Nebraska, making it il-



legal for a husband to rape his wife. 1978 The Pregnancy Discrimination Act bans employment discrimination against pregnant women. Under the Act, a woman cannot be fired or denied a job or a promotion because she is or may become pregnant, nor can she be forced to take a pregnancy leave if she is willing and able to work. 1986 Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson, the Supreme Court finds that sexual harassment is a form of illegal job discrimination.

Ron Harris

Military Muscle

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase, “gym rat?” The term connotes, to most people, the kind of guy or gal who just happens to be at the gym no matter what time you get there. Just as in the hit sitcom Cheers, where you knew certain dependable patrons like Norm and Cliff would always be seated at the bar, some people always seem to be at the gym. They somehow seem to take hours to train a single bodypart, spanning different shifts of front-desk workers and dragging sessions out with endless talking, coffee and bathroom breaks, and a hundred other ways to stretch out their workout. It’s almost as if they don’t want to leave. Now step back and try to be objective for a moment. Is this you? Anylyzing my own marathon workouts, I came to the conclusion that my workouts were much longer than they needed to be, and came up with twelve ideas on how we can all get in and out of the gym faster. Not only will you experience better gains, you’ll have more of a life outside the confines of the iron Palace of Pain we call the gym!

1) Cut the chit-chat

Yes, that was a great movie you saw last night and you want to tell your gym buddies all about it. Yes, that Spinning instructor has been kind of giving you little looks here and there and you want to try talking to her. And yes, it’s always a ripe time to debate who the greatest Mr. Olympia of all time is. But why are you in the gym? If you truly have no other social outlet in your life other than the gym, then perhaps it’s a place you don’t mind whiling away most of your free time. But if you have other, more productive things you’d rather be doing than spend unnecessary hours in a noisy gym, it’s time to zip your lip and train. It’s hard when you’re used to being Joe Garrulous. Everyone expects you to sit at the juice bar, the modern equivalent of the porch of the

old General Store, and hold court with hours of idle gossip and trivia. Your pals will still want to yap it up. One way to shut them off without seeming rude is to wear a pair of headphones every time you train. Most people won’t ask you to take them off to speak unless they have something important to say. In the gym, it’s very rare that any of the conversations are life or death matters. Do not hang around the juice bar, or the front desk, or anywhere else you may tend to get caught up in conversations. If you have a training partner that prefers jaw-jacking over actual training, get rid of the louse. You may come off as rude or arrogant all of a sudden, but it’s a decision you’ll have to make and follow through on if you wish to start making your gym time more efficient.

2) Have a plan of attack

“Hmm. Leg day today. Let’s see, I haven’t squatted in a few weeks, maybe I’ll do that. Let me try a couple sets. Nah. I’m not feeling them right. Maybe I should do leg presses? But wait, all that plate loading...” Is this you? Do you wait until you get to the gym and then start deciding how you’ll train that day? If so, you’re wasting a good deal of time on something that should already be fleshed out before you arrived. Have a good idea of exactly what you’re going to do before you walk through that gym door. Nothing is worse than finishing your first exercise, then wasting precious minutes as you survey the gym floor and look for inspiration on what to do next. Your pump is rapidly diminishing, and the clock, as always, is ticking away. Either the night before, that day, or at least on the ride over to the gym formulate your workout, deciding which exercises you’ll do and in what order. Of course, someone might be using the equipment you wanted, but that’s why we remain flexible. There’s an old saying that goes, “If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail.” Put a bit of preparation into your training and

Animal...

PFC Lucas I. Baldwin, a multimedia illustrator with Headquarters Company, 22d Signal Brigade, pushes through a work set at the Victory gym.



you will instead have successful, productive workouts.

3) Cut breaks down
How many times do you head to the bathroom during your workout? If it's more than once or twice, either you have a bladder the size of a gerbil's or you're subconsciously employing a stall tactic. While you do need to keep hydrated, a dozen trips to the water fountain all add up to time wasted. Carry a water bottle instead.

4) Cut rest time between sets
Many of us, and I guiltily include myself, have borrowed a tenet from the world of powerlifting concerning resting between sets. Powerlifters will rest three to five minutes, sometimes longer, between sets to fully recover from the all-out effort of near-maximum lifts. Many bodybuilders have mistakenly adopted the same method, theorizing that it will allow them to lift heavier as well. If getting stronger is your number one goal, then by all means long rest periods will serve you well. If instead, as the case is for most of us, an impressive physique with huge muscles is your goal, then you should be doing more reps with less weight and resting less. It should take no more than ninety seconds for your breathing to return to normal and the lactic acid to clear from the muscle group after an intense set of eight to twelve reps. (The rep range just about every scientific study has determined optimal for producing growth) Anything beyond two minutes and you're just wasting time. Move on the next set or the next exercise as soon as you are able!

5) Use Supersets and Drop Sets
If you really want to whack a muscle mercilessly in the shortest time possible, start employing supersets and drop sets. You can try

the incredible pre-exhaust method developed by Bob Kennedy and Arthur Jones, supersetting an isolation movement for a bodypart with a compound movement, (ex. leg extensions with leg press) or sets for antagonistic muscle groups, like biceps and triceps, or chest and back. Drop sets are a further way to extend the set and take your muscle fibers into a deeper state of annihilation. Best of all, both techniques will do the same job as a standard workout of straight sets, yet in a fraction of the time.

6) Avoid redundant exercises
Are you efficient, or do you often do many exercises for the exact same muscle function? Take the time to learn a little bit about anatomy and kinesiology, and you'll get a better grasp on how to structure your workouts more efficiently. Unlike Mentzer, I don't believe one exercise can work an entire muscle group, but you should only hit a muscle from the same angle once each workout.

7) Train at off-peak hours
This isn't an option for everyone, which is why every gym in the world is jam-packed at six o'clock at night on weekdays, especially on Mondays. It's very difficult to get a workout done in an hour when there's a line for every bench and machine, and the music and chatter combine for a chaotic cacophony of confusion. If you are able, try to train in the early morning, the late morning, afternoon, or late in the evening. If you're used to the hassle and headache of the crowd scene, you'll be delighted to find what a different experience it is to have a near-empty gym at your disposal. With no waiting around, you should be able to shave off a good block of time from your training.

8) Use more machines

Another way to save time in the gym is to use more machines rather than free weights. I'm not advocating a machines-only policy. That wouldn't help most people gain much muscle. But it takes a long time to load plates and bring heavy dumbbells over to benches. It takes just one second to change the pin on a selectorized weight stack. If you're anti-machine, give them a chance anyway. It might take you over twenty minutes to do three sets of barbell rows, what with all the plate loading and unloading, plus securing the plates with collars or clips. Three sets on a seated cable row should take no more than seven minutes. Besides, machines and cables can give your body and mind a break from the clunky iron once in a while. It's your time. You make the call.

9) Minimize the use of straps and wraps
Certainly straps help you hold on to more weight, but isn't that just because they're taking the place of a strong grip and well-developed forearms? Many of us wear straps not only on deadlifts, but chins, curls, side laterals, and other exercises where they have no legitimate place. Worst of all, think about all the time it takes you to strap in for every single set. It may seem like it's just thirty seconds or so, but adds that up over five exercises for three or four sets each and you can see how it creeps up on you. You'll be amazed at how much your forearms grow in the first month after you stop using straps for everything. Wraps are even worse. Unless you have an actual knee problem, there is no reason to wrap your knees for squatting or leg pressing movements. Most people simply use them to be able to use more weight. Six-time Mr.

Olympia Dorian Yates had the best answer when someone once asked him why he didn't use knee wraps to squat more. The Shadow replied, "I could put a giant spring under my arse as well, but what good would that do me?" Wraps can make you feel invincible and can bait you into using more weight than you can safely handle. Worst of all, they can take over five minutes of your precious time to wrap for each set. \ Toss the straps away and save any wrapping for Christmas presents.

10) Train on a near-empty stomach

than me? How much weight is he using on that? I use more than that." Stop it! This is part of what's keeping you in the gym so long. You must strive to focus on your workout and avoid all other distractions. It's hard to battle such seemingly unconquerable forces as your sex drive and pride, but you can do it. You're stronger than you think you are. Just keep moving in the gym. Save the sightseeing for your vacations.

12) Split up the body into more days
It might seem as if splitting the

I have given you twelve ways to make your workouts faster and more productive so that you can have more time to enjoy the world outside the gym. One thing I hope you noticed is that I did not suggest eliminating warm ups. Not only will warming up with five to ten minutes of cardio and starting off with lighter weights help you perform better in your workout, it will potentially save you from ever experiencing a severe training injury. Few things are worse than being in agonizing pain as the result of an activity you partake in to improve

“Is he bigger than me? How much weight is he using on that? I use more than that.” Stop it! This is part of what’s keeping you in the gym so long.

This sounds bizarre, but I'm trying to give you every possible idea to get in and out of the gym faster. Odds are that if you're full of food, you won't have any urgent reason to want to finish your workout faster. If, however, hunger pangs are starting to chew at your tummy like a rabid pit bull terrier, you'll have an excellent motivation to hurry up and get right to that post-workout shake. Finishing your last meal two hours before you start training should give you enough energy to train, yet make you want to end your training session in an hour or less.

11) Focus, focus, focus
Gyms can be supremely distracting environments. “Is he bigger

body up into more days will actually entail spending more time in the gym, not less. But think about what happens when you train two groups like chest and triceps. Would you agree that by the time you get to triceps, you're so tired that you're almost moving in slow motion? If instead, you did triceps on a separate day, perhaps with biceps or calves, you could knock out your tricep workout in twenty minutes. Whole body routines, or even routines where you train all of the upper body one day and lower the next, are going to result in most people being stuck at the gym for two hours or more, and leaving feeling totally drained and exhausted.

your health and appearance. Now it's up to you. Will you decide to continue to stretch out your training sessions at the gym beyond what is needed, or will you choose to become more efficient? Once you see what getting in and out of the gym faster can do for your physique and your spare time, you might decide that less is indeed more.

Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in this column are the opinions of their respective authors and not the opinions of the U.S. Army, Task Force Adler, or the 22d Signal Brigade. Contact a qualified physician before beginning any exercise or diet routine.

LEAVING OUR LEGACY

When the Texas Army National Guard's 136th Signal Battalion was alerted for possible deployment in early 2005, one of the first obstacles to overcome was a personnel shortage in all four of the companies that composed the unit. Ultimately, a two-part solution was selected. First, 100% of the soldiers in the Houston-based Charlie Company were transferred to fill the vacancies in the remaining three companies, effectively collapsing Charlie in the short term. In the second step, the search was on for a deployable company from elsewhere in the state or nation, a unit that could take Charlie Company's place. The state of Texas called the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C., and when the NGB issued its call, it was the state of South Carolina that answered, proudly sending the 111th Signal Battalion's Delta Company to fill the void.

The challenge of a company-sized element joining a unit from another state already in motion for deployment may have been unique for Delta's leaders, but they were soon to share at least one more hurdle with the other companies. The United States Army's much-publicized transformation, in conjunction with on-the-ground adaptations to a new-style conflict had already resulted in many units from across the force doing



missions quite different from the ones they had trained for years to do. The amalgam Battalion (now known as Task Force Southern Lightning) was not to be immune from this effect, and no where was this to be truer than with Delta Company.

In a traditional combat signal mission, Delta would install and maintain one geographic portion of a tactical voice, data, and video communications network

was to emplace the miles of fiber optic cable that would serve as the communications backbone for the old Iraqi Al Sahra Air Base near Tikrit, currently occupied by coalition forces as Forward Operating Base Speicher. Delta Company First Sergeant Roger Dangerfield of Spartanburg, South Carolina says there was some delay initially. "The biggest obstacle was getting the planners to come to the FOB, to talk about what we were

where they might be able to help improve communications. This sometimes translated into their soldiers knocking on doors and asking if and how well phones at each location were working. Dangerfield says that the people they asked were very receptive. "One of the first things we did was to install new phone lines at a warehouse near [the Task Force's Motor Pool]. [The occupants] were so appreciative because they had

SPC Riley of Delta Company, 136th Signal Battalion, unrolls 12-pair fiber optic cable from a fiber spool. The fiber serves as the communications backbone for the old Iraqi Al Sahra Air Base near Tikrit, currently occupied by coalition forces as Forward Operating Base Speicher.

for maneuver units. But early on, the company got word that it would have a mission to help establish the commercialized civilian-style communications network in Iraq. Strategically, this would be a network that would be used to support Coalition forces in the short term, but ultimately would be a part of the larger infrastructure improvements being left behind for the benefit of Iraq's fledgling democracy.

Delta Company soon learned that part of its specific mission

doing, and what it would take to get it done."

During the lag time that occurred while higher commands finalized the overall commercialization plan, Delta Company's leadership noted that some sections of the existing network of tactically supported phone lines were not fully functional, especially at the level of the many military and civilian contractor users that lived and worked on the FOB.

Delta dispatched teams to proactively contact and support FOB offices and living areas to see

been here a year, but sometimes they had been without phone lines for 3 or 4 months." Delta had them back up and running in about a day or two.

In addition to helping phone network users, Delta Company also began getting their soldiers trained up for the task of laying a cabled material with which most of their unit had no familiarity. There was a handful who had worked in the fields of cable/satellite television or public utilities. Largely, however, the individuals with specific experience in fiber optics were few.

"We hope that [the network] is going to remain here once we leave...to help the Iraqis." - MAJ Javier Hernandez

136TH SIGNAL BATTALION

It was off to school for many of Delta's signaleers.

In theater, the five day class that makes soldiers into fiber optics installers can be found at Baghdad's Camp Victory. Among the first to travel to the Iraqi capital was SGT Joseph Collins from the town of Ninety Six in South Carolina. Collins says there was a lot of information packed into that short class. "They taught us everything from when fiber was invented to the theories on fiber. [They taught us] how to install and terminate fiber, and how to splice fiber to other types of

in the civilian world, so it may help some of them out." Fricks says that Delta has sent 9 soldiers to the fiber school so far, and projects to have 25 to 30 certified fiber installers by end of April. Like many other unit members, Fricks would have preferred to be working with the tactical communications equipment he was used to, "but once we started commercialization, there are definitely some worthwhile skills being learned."

In addition to his Delta Company chain of command, SSG Fricks also works with a variety of engineers, civilian contractors, and

Soldiers of Delta Company, 136th Signal battalion, apply a rubber sealant to a fiber encasing tube. By laying pipe as well as fiber, the fiber is protected from accidental breakage from unauthorized diggers.

fiber." Collins said the instruction on splicing and termination was particularly effective because it included a hands-on portion.

Fellow class graduate SGT Calvin Butler (also from Ninety Six) sees post-deployment career implications. "It could be really valuable back home, if you choose to go into a field dealing with fiber – telephone companies and such."

SSG Roger Dale Fricks from Ware Shoals, South Carolina is working as a Fiber Installation Team Chief for one of three install teams that Delta has put together for this mission. Fricks echoes Butler's observation. "Some of the soldiers...are now more than qualified to go work with any telephone or utility company installing fiber. It pays pretty well

higher signal commands on a day to day basis. One of the entities that helps direct Delta's efforts is the 335th Theater Signal Command. MAJ Javier Hernandez, Communications Integrator OIC for the 335th, says that Delta has a sizable task ahead of it. "My goal is to finish the outside physical plant by September, which includes the fiber backbone ring."

The installation of that ring is a multi-step project for the South Carolina unit. First, deep trenches have to be dug along the entire route that the fiber will run. This is done with a backhoe if available, but often with troop-powered picks and shovels when one isn't. Then, six layers of conduit pipe are laid in the trenches to help protect the glass-based cable that will be

installed. Cord is fed through the pipe sections, which are then glued together. Finally, using the cord, two strands of fiber optic cable are pulled through two of the conduit pipes. The remaining four pipes will temporarily be left empty for future expansion.

By the end of the project, Delta Company should dig and install over twelve miles of fiber backbone. And if everything falls into place, they will start to work on the splinter runs to and inside of the base's many buildings before redeploying.

It's not often that a portion of a business, partnership, or military unit's mission is to work itself out of a job, but that's what Delta Company and other Signal units throughout Iraq are doing. SGT Butler knows that part of the plan is to reduce the number of signal units in theater as each rotation is completed. "The more they commercialize, the more they can cut back on signal personnel coming over." MAJ Hernandez adds, "Once we finish...here at Speicher, then contractors will to take over and manage it."

Hernandez is quick to say that Delta is doing an outstanding job. And leaving that impression is one of First Sergeant Dangerfield's objectives for his company, a goal that he says his soldiers are meeting. "I'm proud of my soldiers. They make my job easy." He wants his soldiers to know that the infrastructure they are building should have an impact long after Delta is back in South Carolina. "We hope that it's going to remain here once we leave, and [support] whatever they decide to put here... to help the Iraqis."





THE TRIALS AND THE RIGORS

of **HOLDING** THE LINE

The 22nd Signal Brigade has the highest retention rates of all the seperates in V Corps. The 32nd Signal Battalion has reenlisted more Soldiers than any other unit in the 22d. CPT Alison Hangar takes a look inside one of the most successful and best loved battalions in V Corps.

In a time of combat operations, harsh environmental conditions, and separation from family, re-enlistment seems to be the hardest mission that a unit could have. Asking Soldiers and their families to stay the course and continue being part of the Army at times is a lot to ask. The 32nd Signal Battalion, located at Logistical



SPC Kharisma A. James of the 32nd Signal Battalion shows off her certificate of reenlistment with LTC William S. Schumaker.

32ND SIGNAL BATTALION

Support Area (LSA) Anaconda, Iraq, faces this challenge head-on and succeeds. The re-enlistment program, spearheaded by SSG(P) John Randall, a career counselor, has re-enlisted 130 members of the Warhorn Battalion since deploying in October of 2005, more than any of the other four units that make up the 22nd Signal Brigade's Task Force Adler. LTC William S. Schumaker, the Battalion Commander of the 32d Signal Battalion, credits his career counselor for the high number of Soldiers choosing to continue their time in the Army. "SSG Randall works harder than any other career counselor I've worked with in my 20 years of service. His dedication to Soldiers is unparalleled and it's apparent that he really enjoys helping Soldiers to reach their goals."

Members of the 32nd are located at eleven different Forward Operating Bases throughout the northern Iraq Area of Operations. SSG(P) Randall and his retention

office have traveled more than any other re-enlistment team in the Task Force to ensure that Soldiers' needs are taken care of. "The reason we are doing so well is the fact that we try to get the Soldiers what they want. If that requires staying here late at night trying to get through to the Soldier's branch or flying to the Soldier to let them know I am doing everything I can, then that's what we do," says Randall.

In the first 6 months of their year-long deployment to Iraq, Soldiers in the 32nd have been paid over \$1.6 million in re-enlistment bonuses, almost half of the money paid for the entire Task Force. "The money is definitely the most rewarding career incentive I've ever known," says SGT(P) Betty McCormack, HHC/32nd's Orderly Room NCOIC of the \$17,000 she received. SSG(P) Randall expects the Battalion to easily cross the \$3 million mark by the end of the deployment. For others, re-enlist-

ing is about more than the money. It's the about opportunity to serve in the Army in a new and different capacity or in a different place. Several are taking this chance to try out a new Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) or try to see a different part of the world. With the transformation of the Signal Corps to a branch more focused on commercialized communications, many Signal Soldiers are taking the opportunity to go back to school and try their hands at Aviations Operations Specialist or the more computer network-based Information Systems Operator Analyst. Others want a chance to be stationed in Japan, at other bases in Germany, or at posts in the United States close to family.

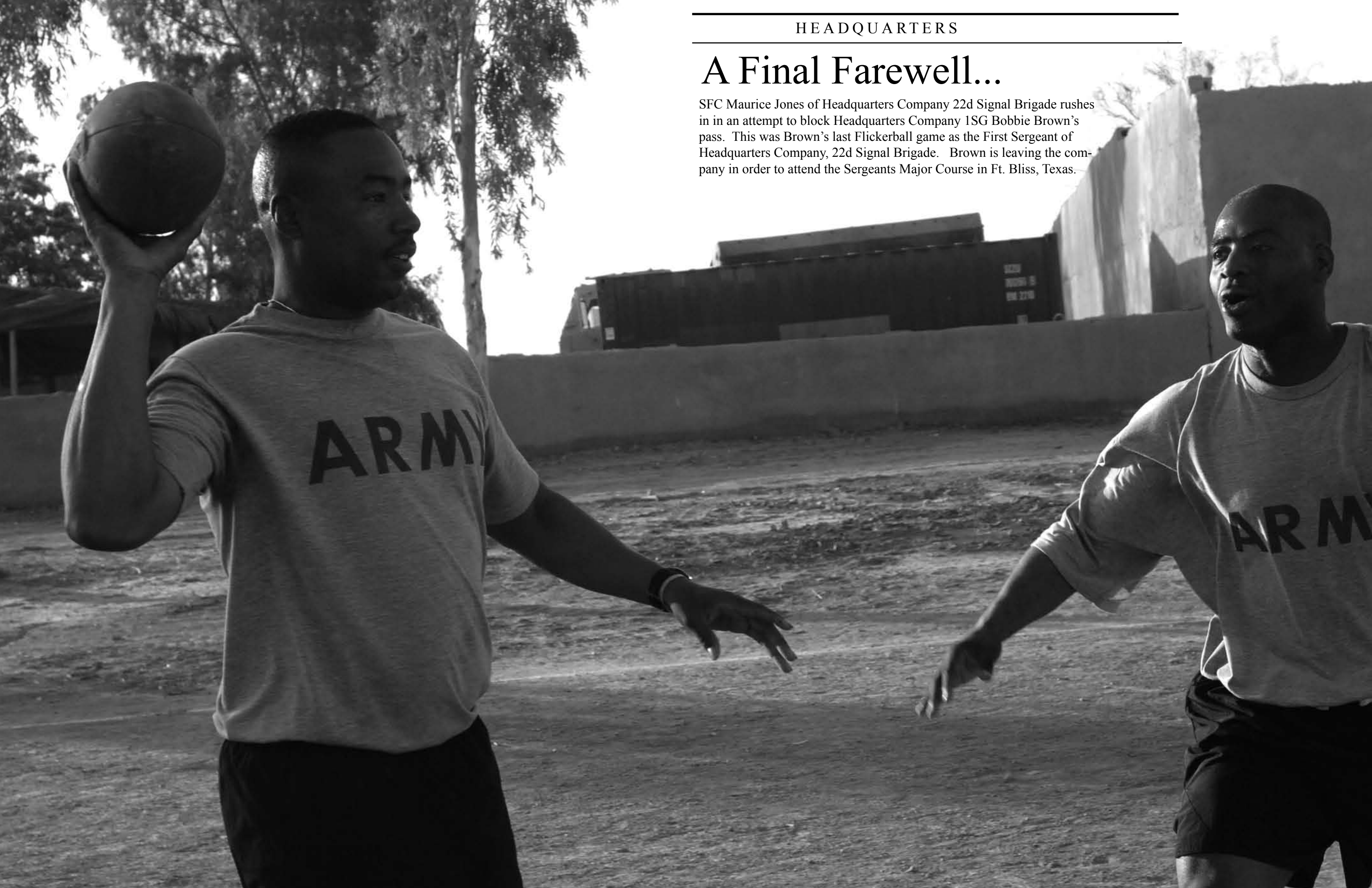
And for some, it's not about money or a new job, it's about duty. With the 32d Signal Battalion facing deactivation upon return to its home station of Darmstadt, Germany, many Soldiers simply want the chance to be there at the end. SSG Jason Horton, a Node Center Section Sergeant, re-enlisted to stay right where he is, as a member of the Warhorn Battalion. "This re-enlistment for me wasn't about a bonus, it was about my duty. The 32d has been a home to me. This is my first duty station and it just didn't feel right inside leaving a place that I have called home for over 4 years when I knew it was going to be deactivating in under a year when we return. I not only owe it to all of my leaders, but to the Battalion, to see to it that it's deactivated honorably. Until the last colors are cased, the 32d to me will still be home."

SSG Joseph Benn of the 32nd Signal Battalion shows off his reenlistment certificate with GEN George Casey.



A Final Farewell...

SFC Maurice Jones of Headquarters Company 22d Signal Brigade rushes in in an attempt to block Headquarters Company 1SG Bobbie Brown's pass. This was Brown's last Flickerball game as the First Sergeant of Headquarters Company, 22d Signal Brigade. Brown is leaving the company in order to attend the Sergeants Major Course in Ft. Bliss, Texas.



“Give me two days”

By CPT Todd Belie

“That, Captain Belie, may I have that?” Not sure what he was referring to, I pressed down on the brake pedal and looked past the Ford F-150’s side-view mirror. As my eyes aligned with the direction of Mustafa’s outstretched hand, I still failed to see what had caught his eye.

Some ten meters in front of the truck stood an overflowing garbage pin; the standard green type, no different than the dozens of other ones scattered around Victory Base. Already somewhat irritated and wanting to get back to the comfort of my office chair as soon as possible, I slid the gear shifter upward until it rested in park. Seatbelt off and door open, I was on the ground waiting by the bin for a few seconds before Mustafa rounded the vehicle. It’s amazing how a few seconds stretch into an eternity when you’re frustrated. The little bit of treasure he spotted was a broken, metal end table, prostrate, with its legs up on the surface of the bin. The nearest leg was disjointed, dangling inward at a forty-five degree angle.

In the scheme of great life decisions, the back-and-forth on this one didn’t figure too prominently in my mind, and with a final look and a nod, I hoisted the end table into

the bed of the truck and in a matter of seconds, we were driving again. Sensing my irritation, Mustafa threw out, in his choppy, elongated English, “Thank you, Captain Belie. It’s broken now, but I fix.” Hassan Ali Abbas was mostly soft-spoken, but naturally aggressive. He had an instinct for business, and was never one to wait around for things to happen. His English wasn’t very good, but much better than my nonexistent Arabic. Mustafa, as we called him, was an opportunist in the best sense of the word. He saw the world thru a filter of possibilities. That he would take the time to learn another language to open himself to more business, or pull a simple, broken table from the trash was a testament to that vision.

When I first met him back in June on our reconnaissance trip, I took him in with a casual indifference. He struck me as the quintessential used car salesman; greasy and

overly boisterous. “For you my friend, I get anything. You need anything, you call me” he would say.

It’s funny that what he said back in June turned out to be true. If we needed something, chances are, he could get it: print cartridges, picture frames, copier repairs, flooring—he could get it. As the S4, it often felt like cheating to go to Mustafa for something. It was just too easy to get what we needed. Sometimes it would become a game on my part to stump Mustafa. I would throw out an odd request, half expecting him to tell me that it was simply not possible. Instead I would receive a moment of brief silence as his mind processed. I imagine he was visualizing his various contacts, and what steps such a request would entail. Invariably he would come back, not with “I’ll see what I can do,” or “it’s not possible,” but a simple, confident, almost boastful, “give me two days.”

Over the two months the 440th Signal Battalion has been in Iraq, I’ve spent what amounts to no more than a handful of minutes with Mustafa during the day or two a week he would come in to drop off supplies and receive new requests. As it turns out, during the last week of November I would end up spending more time with him than all the previous weeks combined. I had no idea it would also be his last week alive.

Gravel is nothing more than bulk quantities of small, unrefined rocks. Yet it amazes me how much of a commodity it is here, and even more so how hard it is to get. Acquiring gravel on Victory Base thru the regular Army system is a path lined with red tape. Facing a several month long ordeal, I humored myself by asking Mustafa what he could do about getting gravel. The brief conversation that followed had him asking how much we needed. The fact that he responded with something other than “no” left me with nothing but a hasty reply that it depended on the cost, but something on the order of five truckloads might do. “Yes,” he replied, “but some trucks are bigger than others.” Closing out the discussion to form, he said he would be back in a few days with a per-cubic-meter quote. A little over \$60 per-cubic-meter, if you were interested.

Mustafa didn’t specialize in gravel any more than he specialized in any of the other supplies he obtained for us. He simply saw our need and found a way to fill it. The first date the delivery was scheduled for fell thru. Five truckloads of gravel and five drivers simply could not get thru the enormous line at the transload gate. They would return the next day, early in the morning, to try again. We spent half of the next day driving back and forth to the transload gate on Liberty Base, trying in vain to get the gravel inside. Aside from all the normal hassles of getting Iraqi trucks loaded with cargo thru an American checkpoint, we were dealt another blow when a security incident closed the gate for the

remainder of the second day. Two days in a row, and no luck. Two days in a row, and five drivers with trucks full of gravel idling in a dangerous line for nearly thirteen hours. As we began the disheartening drive back from the transload gate, the truck’s seatbelt alarm went off, reminding Mustafa to fasten his strap. It wasn’t just the annoying American alarm that frustrated Mustafa that day. Needless to say, the drivers were a little on the edge as well; thirteen hours of waiting in line near a car filled with explosives. In his broken English he asked that we pay a small sum for the drivers. He explained that absolutely no money was for him, but something for the drivers, for what they had been through. His English was always hard to grasp, but his sincerity and his message was clear enough in his eyes.

As we drove out on our second trip we also talked briefly about the incident and about his own security. We both agreed that getting a pile of rocks was proving to be more trouble than it was worth. I asked him if he thought he was ever in danger. He said no. Abu Ghraib was a dangerous area, but beyond that the only thing he worried about were occasional attacks by what he referred to as the “foreign fighters.” We had met a young specialist from Oklahoma at the transload gate who was excited to be on his way home in just over a month’s time, and during the ride back we talked about American Soldiers with this specialist in mind. I told him we wanted Iraq for Iraqis and that we’d all prefer to be home with our families as soon as pos-

sible. He told me he understood and ended the conversation saying “Iraq for Iraqis.” Hassan Ali Abbas was killed on a Thursday evening. He wasn’t killed by insurgents or foreign fighters, but by robbers who set up a makeshift roadblock and tried to steal his car. He wouldn’t give it up, and they shot him in the head. Some have wondered why he just didn’t give up the car. Things can be replaced, but people can’t, so the cliché goes. Especially with someone as tenacious as Mustafa, I doubt he would have had much trouble getting another car. Had he acquiesced he still might be with his family. Maybe it would have been better to give up the car; to tactically retreat. Perhaps get a good look at the faces of the young men who took the vehicle; come back later and hunt them down. Maybe he was foolish or too stubborn for his own good. But I can’t say that I fault him.

I think he saw something that will still take most Iraqis some time to get used to. A different way of thinking. A thinking based on independence and self reliance. “Why should I give up my car just because you say so?” Giving in to terror and intimidation wasn’t his thing. He made a living for himself and his family by working hard and finding opportunity, not by taking from others by force. His daughters won’t grow up with him at their side, but they have a chance to grow up in an Iraq that is freer, where the people do not give into fear and intimidation. Where policy and property are not arbitrated at gun point. They will live in an Iraq that is for Iraqis.

BIRTH OF A BACKBONE

By CPT Adam S. Collett

First in, last out” has long been a motto of Signalers in the United States Army because of the essential role communication plays in combat, from the first gunshot until the last boot leaves the ground. This will always be true; however the means by which the forces communicate is rapidly changing. From smoke signals,

mirrors, and flags to high frequency radios and satellite, the military pursues faster, better, higher capacity means of communication. Iraq has been a testing ground for numerous new weapons and machinery in the combat realm, and for signal it is no different. Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) equip-

ment using fiber optic technology is replacing the wire and cables which Signalers have used for decades. The trend to commercialize began in late 2003, with the commercialization of the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and Logistical Support Areas (LSAs) in Baghdad. During this deployment

of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 05-07, commercialization of LSA Diamondback and FOB Marez is the focus of Delta Company, 29th Signal Battalion, with 1LT Brock and SFC Call, 3rd platoon leader and platoon sergeant, leading the way.

Until this deployment, 3rd platoon, Delta Company, was tasked with providing the battalion's tactical satellite support. Third platoon also has a large cable section to complete company cable missions. During OIF 05-07 3rd platoon, along with the rest of Delta Company, received a mission that is different than any they have had before: plan and execute the installation of advanced commercial equipment at LSA Diamondback and FOB Marez. The

concept of a commercial network is similar to the tactical network used up until this time, but the names of the pieces are different. Fiber cable runs from the Area Distribution Nodes (ADNs) in a ring. Each ADN can support up to eleven user buildings. The ADN fiber runs to a switch at the user building; from these run the CAT V cables which terminate to the subscribers' computers and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) terminals. At the Technical Control Facility (TCF), the network is controlled and administered. Fortunately for this platoon, several members of the team brought with them a back ground in commercial equipment and the technical know how to install fiber cable.

SSG Hayden coordinates the inside plant team which terminates the fiber cables inside each building at the node. Each node has the capacity to support thousands of users, with the number of users

limited only by the number of ports available on the node's switches. Terminating the fibers is painstaking, detailed work as each fiber is about the same width as a human hair. Prior to joining 29th Signal Battalion, SSG Hayden worked on commercializing Camp Liberty in Baghdad in 2004. In preparation for that, he attended several schools including a six week Basic Installers Course at Ft. Huachuca, which consisted of a 10 block on fiber termination, for which he was awarded 3M certification. He also attended a six month splicing school at Shepard Air Force Base in Texas, which prepared him for this commercialization task. As a result, SSG Hayden contributes greatly to Delta Company's mission to commercialize LSA Diamondback.

Another 3rd platoon NCO, SSG Smith, heads up the most visible part of the commercialization process: the outside plant.

With the gigantic backhoes and the ditch witch that eats through cement streets and tough rocks, the outside plant team has been a conspicuous feature on LSA Diamondback for the past month. This team which is augmented by an Air Force platoon of the Red Horse Engineers digs the ditches and lays the fiber cables which comprise the backbone of the commercial network. Although the work has progressed quickly

Delta company, 29th Signal Battalion Soldiers lay cable to commercialize FOB Diamondback.



HEADQUARTERS

with over six miles of fiber lain in the past five weeks, this team has overcome some significant challenges. Some of the obstacles they have overcome include cement roads, large rocks, dodging buried power lines, and once they ran into a buried connex. This work also requires intense physical labor in sometimes adverse weather conditions of heat, rain, and wind. Despite these challenges SSG Smith enjoys working closely with his Soldiers and seeing how the team camaraderie grows as the work progresses. Inside the TCF SSG Shelton and his team of Promina, Redcom, call manager, and server experts manage this “brain” of the communication network. Once the fiber network is complete and powered up, the status of the network connections through the ADNs will be monitored from the TCF. From here, the fiber network on LSA Diamondback connects to the outside world via shots from an eight foot tactical satellite dish and through a commercial AN 50, which looks like a small flat panel mounted on an antenna. As this commercialization project progresses, the tactical MNB-NW server domain which is currently



in use will be replaced by a strategic CENTCOM domain. This new domain will allow greater interoperability for the over 2000 users currently on the MNB-NW domain

with other units also in the Iraq theater of operations. The transition is necessary also to support the closing of FOB Courage. Once the new servers come online with the

fiber, the users on LSA Diamondback and FOB Marez will experience much more efficient service and greater speed on their internet connection. However this will re-

quire that each individual computer and each user on the current domain is properly transferred to the new domain with minimal loss of data and a seamless email transi-

tion. A dedicated team of nine Soldiers from 2nd Platoon led by 1LT Chan and SFC Buchanan will soon be undertaking this challenging mission to be complete by early June to

accommodate the phasing out of the MNB-NW servers currently in use. Although the work of installing the physical fiber network is almost done on LSA Diamond-

back, the work on FOB Marez is just beginning. 1LT O’Malley and SFC Smith, Large Extension Node Platoon (1st Platoon) has begun laying the groundwork for this next phase of the project with customer surveys and mapping how they will arrange the fiber backbone for the network. Some of the inside and outside plant team members from 3rd platoon will augment the Soldiers from 1st platoon to lend their experience so that this project has the same success as Diamondback. Despite the challenges they are sure to face, in a few short months they will be able to look back and voice an agreement with 1LT Brock, who said of the project, “The most rewarding aspect has been watching my Soldiers tireless commitment to accomplish a mission that will have such a positive impact on all of the units on LSA Diamondback and FOB Marez.” Ultimately, the transition to commercial communication equipment will lead to phasing out tactical military communications and transfer those services to a more robust strategic network. These conditions will help set the stage to transfer authority of LSA Diamondback and FOB Marez to a reduced Signal force for the OIF rotation 06-08.



KEEPING TRADITION ALIVE

Ellie, Colleen, and Christine Connors all followed in their father's and grandfather's footsteps, attending West Point and becoming commissioned officers in the United States Army. Now Christine, the youngest of the daughters, is leading her Soldiers in the 440th Signal Battalion through Iraq.

He was the Minuteman on the Battlefields of Lexington and Concord during the American Revolution. He was on both sides at the Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War. He was the American Doughboy at the Battles of the Somme and at Flanders during World War I. He stormed the beaches of Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Anzio and Normandy and he faithfully held the line at the Battle of the Bulge during World War II. He was on the Pusan Perimeter in Korea and he

served multiple tours in the jungles of Vietnam. Who is he? He is the Citizen Soldier. You know, the intrepid citizen who answers our Nation's call in times of need, who raises his arms against our Nation's enemies until they are subdued, then returns to live a life truly enjoying and valuing the freedoms that he fought so hard to defend.

Citizen Soldiering is common in many families and throughout the history of our great nation. It is certainly nothing new to the

Connors family. Eugene Connors courageously fought to liberate Europe on many battlefields in France, Belgium and Germany and was wounded in action during World War II. His son, Dan Connors, served as an Infantry Platoon Leader and Rifle Company Commander for two tours in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970. Many may have thought that this proud family tradition of military service during our nation's darkest hours might end when Dan Connors and his

TRADITION AND FAMILY

lovely wife Patricia had three daughters and only one son. Well, they thought wrong.

Ellie, Colleen, and Christine Connors all followed in their father's and grandfather's footsteps. Ellie, the oldest, was the first in the family to attend the United States Military Academy, at West Point. She entered the Academy in the summer of 1997 while Colleen and Christine were still in high school. Inspired by the tales of Ellie's experiences at the Academy, Colleen and Christine both decided to follow in her footsteps by attending the Academy and becoming commissioned officers in the United States Army. All three girls were recruited to play for the Women's

Soccer Team at the Academy and they had the fortune to be able to spend a year together as teammates before Ellie graduated in 2001. At the time, they were the only set of three sisters serving at any of the federal academies simultaneously. Colleen and Christine enjoyed two more years at the Academy until Colleen graduated in 2003. Christine followed the next year when she was pinned with Second Lieutenant bars by her two older sisters and best friends.

Ellie is currently an Engineer Captain and is stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. She deployed to Iraq in 2003 with 63rd Engineer Company as a Platoon Leader. She is now a Comptroller for the 20th Engineer Brigade. She married one of her classmates, Captain RJ Jimenez. He is a Chinook pilot who deployed to Afghanistan in 2003-2004 and then spent one year in Iraq with C Company, 159th Aviation Regiment.

Colleen is also an Engineer officer. She is a First Lieutenant with the 46th Engineer Battalion stationed out of Fort Polk, Louisiana. She works as the

Battalion Adjutant and is currently deployed with her unit to Ar Ramadi, Iraq.

Christine, the youngest daughter, chose a slightly different path from her older sisters. Christine, known as Tina to her friends and fellow officers, is a Signal officer. She came to the 440th Signal Battalion in January 2005 and took over Node Center 22 as the platoon leader. She learned quickly under a trial by fire rigorous training program in preparation for deployment to Iraq during which she carefully ensured her Soldiers were ready to go.

Gene, the youngest and only son, is currently a junior at Westchester University in Pennsylvania.

He plans to enter the Army and attend Officer Candidate School after he graduates.

As you can tell, service to the Nation and family ties are immensely important to this special and dedicated family. Dan Connors sends cards, emails, and care packages to his daughters when they are deployed. He reads the TF Runner Battalion Newsletter and regularly visits the TF Runner FRG

website to see the latest pictures of his daughter's unit and get the latest info on what she and her Node Center 22 "MADDAWGS" are doing.

Christine and Colleen were able to reunite in a holiday visit in Ar Ramadi over the Christmas Holiday. Christine waited at the Griffin LZ for several hours nightly for 6 days straight until 0400hrs in the morning awaiting a Space-A flight to see her big sister, Colleen. She made it to Ar Ramadi where they spent 5 days talking, laughing, and reconnecting.

The Connors Sisters look forward to reuniting when their time of service to the Army is over. In the meantime, they are proud to serve with the greatest people in the world—the American Soldier!



CLEANSWEEP

The networks on COB Speicher, home of the 101st Airborne, were suffering from a high rate of data loss. CW2 Patrick Quenga, CW2 Darren Gilbert, and WO1 Phillip Weller took charge in converting the posture of Speicher from a tactical to a strategic network, bringing Task force Adler one step closer to their goal of unifying Iraq under one network domain by CPT Jenine Melton



ENGINEERING

From late night meetings with the 136th Signal Battalion Technical Control Facility (TCF) Staff to concentrated meetings about Network upgrades with the 101st Airborne Division Engineers, 22d Signal Brigade's Warrant Officers - CW2 Patrick Quenga, Brigade Automations Technician, CW2 Darren Gilbert, Brigade Network Technician and WO1 Phillip Weller, Brigade Data Technician – attack problems head on and work vigorously toward resolution. These Technicians epitomize today's new Breed of Warrant Officers. Warrant Officers are no longer just the focal point for every technical question within their field of responsibility; they also make it happen! This new breed of Leaders works along side the Soldiers mentoring, guiding and advising as they tackle issues. They are in rare form implementing the same standards they teach.

With the posture of Speicher changing from a FOB (Forward Operation Base) to a COB (Contingency Operating Base), LTC Maureen O'Connor, 22d Signal Brigade Network Engineer, foresaw a situation that required immediate mitigation. Reacting quickly, LTC O'Connor created a special projects team utilizing three of her lead technicians to assist 136th Signal Battalion and 101st Airborne Division with improving their network services. Despite their hectic work schedule and endless stream of service calls, two of the three warrant officers packed their bags in anticipation for the six day mission that awaited them at COB Speicher. WO1 Weller arrived a day later after he received change of mission from his routing installation mission in 29th Signal Battalion's area of operations. Duty called and the three answered loud and clear!



CW2 Patrick Quenga configures a router at FOB Speicher.



29th Signal Soldiers configure a USC-60 Sateelite receiver at FOB Courage.

“The purpose of this mission was to change the physical network topology at COB Speicher in order to break Strategic, JNN and MSE assets into three different autonomous systems (AS) [data networks]. The AS break-out should improve routing for VoIP and regular data IP traffic by decreasing latency [the delay of traffic] by 60%,” said WO1 Weller, recapping the recent chain of events. Upon their arrival to the compound, they were escorted to the technical control facility (TCF) and introduced to the OIC, CPT John Brush



The finished Mosul Airfeild TCF Setup.

29th Signal Soldiers convoy out of Mosul airfield at dawn.



ENGINEERING

The TCF – Central location for all strategic communications that provides at a minimum: DSN Voice, NIPR and SIPR – is currently under the operational control and maintenance of the 136th Signal Battalion. “It was good to see what an actual TCF was and how it operates, and also to get a Battalion’s perspective on the mission,” CW2 Quenga said. They also visited NC31’s Platoon Leader, 2LT Michael Estrada, and Switch Supervisor, SFC Russell Bunker, and NC30’s Platoon Leader, 1LT Fredis Herrera, and Platoon Sergeant, SFC Charles Dobbs, to tellite links. “It’s good to get back out and see what is going on. I have a greater appreciation for what Soldiers are doing in the field and what challenges they are facing in their surroundings,” CW2 Gilbert states. Later that evening, CW2 Quenga and CW2 Gilbert went to the 136th Signal Battalion Command and Control Center (BATCON) to discuss future operation plans for the TCF with Battalion Commander, LTC Timothy Smith and his S3 Staff. “Everyone was very open and recognized that we came to help and provide

assistance,” CW2 Quenga captured in his trip report. The following day, CW2 Quenga worked with the MNC-I C6 Information Systems Chief and MNC-I C6 plans to assess NIPR and SIPR services made available through the TCF while CW2 Gilbert assisted both Node Centers with resolving link issues. After WO1 Weller’s arrival, all the Technicians met with the 101st Air Assault Division’s Chief Network Engineer, MAJ Bernd Kohler. WO1 Weller briefed the plan of the routing network changeover and MAJ Kohler gave his overview. All parties departed with a clear understanding of the task and agreed to its content. The days that followed entailed a lot of planning and coordinating resulting in very few hours of sleep for all parties involved. The end state was that the communications improved dramatically across the network. “We had to do some patches to the systems and upgrade current configurations to interface with the strategic network,” CW2 Gilbert continues. “The final outcome, crystal clear VoIP connectivity and

greatly improved data transmission.” The appropriate term to use here is “Teamwork.” Without a representative from each of their respective areas this task would have been impossible to accomplish. “Working along side WO1 Weller and CW2 Gilbert was cool because they are both experts in their area and they would talk me through equipment to a level that I would understand,” states CW2 Quenga. “Brigade policed up a situation in order to implement a standard across theater to improve communication. Now, the same mission could possibly be accomplished with less personnel,” WO1 Weller said. So what makes these Warrant Officers stand out from other ranks? CW2 Quenga, CW2 Gilbert and WO1 Weller are experts in their respective fields. They always understand that the mission comes first. They work alongside the Soldiers so they have a direct influence on their action, conduct and bearing. In a modern age, they are a living standard for Soldiers to follow because they are in their midst, working and leading them.



CPT Jenine Melton, the Baghdad Signal University commandant, demonstrates fiber splicing techniques.

ENGINEERING

coordinate a fiber training course at MAF for 29th Soldiers. The BSU cadre worked with CPT Miller to procure the equipment necessary to conduct the training according to mission requirements. “There was a lot of coordinating and planning between 335th Signal Brigade, BSU and the commercialization team to make this project happen,” states SFC Lamanns Fingers, Fort Gordon Augmentee, BSU Primary Instructor. “I ensured that the equipment was received and properly inventoried prior to shipment”, states SFC Russell Baker, Chief of Training. After all the equipment was received and shipped, the BSU command team, consisting of the OIC and NCOIC, and ANTEON team parted their AO to conduct a 4 day in-depth training course for Delta Company 29th Signal Battalion Soldiers. “

The ANTEON team and BSU command team conducted a Fiber training course for 20 Soldiers. “The Fiber Training course taught Soldiers how to install, splice and terminate Fiber in various applications to include running the Fiber with SC Connectors, splicing the fiber using the Fusion splicer and testing the fiber using the OTDR,” CPT Jordan states. “All the skills needed to properly install a fiber network were taught in the classroom,” recaps Eugene Oh. “Soldiers have a better understanding of how to install equipment to commercial standard”. “We ensured that we covered all areas from point A to point B,” said SFC Jeffrey Mack, BSU NCOIC. Most of the Soldiers attending training had little or no experience with fiber optics. “I had no fiber optic experience prior to the start of this course,” states PV2 Ryan



Students at Baghdad Signal University review fiber splicing techniques

Learning on the run

Baghdad Signal university is charged with teaching Soldiers networking techniques that take months in the civilian world, within a matter of weeks by CPT Jenine Melton

Baghdad Signal University (BSU) charged with the mission to provide training to Soldiers and their leaders in data and communication operations and technical expertise for communications in MNC-I, went above and beyond their call of duty to assist Soldiers located outside their Area of Operation (AO). Delta Company 29th Signal Battalion, Commander CPT Anthony Jordan and First Sergeant

1SG Edward Hayes, request for Baghdad Signal University to provide a Fiber Optic training course for their Soldiers at Mosul Airfield (MAF) in support of an upcoming commercialization mission. 29th Signal Battalion from Fort Lewis, Washington falls under 22d Signal Brigade Task Force Adler organizational structure in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom OIF 05-07. “With very few Soldiers

and NCOs within our company trained to standard on this equipment,” states 1LT Kenneth Brock, Delta Company, OIC for Technical Control Facility (TCF). “fiber optic training is necessary”. Aware of this dilemma, Baghdad Signal University cadre, along with CPT Nicholas Miller, Commercialization OIC, worked with Eugene Oh and Brad Smoczyk, ANTEON Senior Engineer/Team members, to

Guiao, D Co 29th Soldier. “My only experience with fiber optics was when my Section Sergeant showed me how to splice before the class,” said PV2 Ricky Wade, D Co 29th Soldier. Taking into consideration the Soldiers limited background pertaining to fiber optics the ANTEON team decided to conduct training to the speed of the Soldiers in the course. “The Soldiers adaptability dictated the speed of the course”, said Eugene Oh.

“The hands on portion gave me a clearer idea about fiber optics,” said PV2 Ryan Guiao, D Co 29th Soldier. “Hands on training is essential to complete this commercialization mission,” SSG Thomas Hayden, MAF OSP/ISP Team Chief, explains. He was chosen to assist the instructors, during the course, due to his experience and vast knowledge of fiber optics. “I have over six years of fiber experience,” states SSG Hayden. “During OIF I, under 1st CAV, my cable team installed fiber on the Liberty side of Camp Victory freeing up a total of 15 SENS”.

From splicing to fusing, by the end of the fiber optic course training course Soldiers left more knowledgeable and prepared for the upcoming commercialization mission. “Soldiers were trained on the applications of fiber optics in support of mission requirements,” states CPT Jordan. “The instructors allowed us to work at our own pace and showed us hands on how to work with the fiber,” said PV2 Wade. “The course was cool because I know now how a little piece of glass can go a long way”. “It is our job to ensure that Soldiers are mission capable and prepared for the road ahead,” states SFC Mack.

Why train? “Improper training slows down the commercialization process”, said SGT Jason Patitucci, BSU Data SME. “So therefore training to proficiency will enhance performance of this effort”. Baghdad Signal University ensures that Soldiers receive training no matter where they are located in theater. Training the Task Force is their number objective. “If there is a need it is our job to fulfill it,” states SSG Martin, BSU Instructor and Promina SME. “No matter what the distance or the location, BSU will make it happen.”

LTC Maureen O’Conner gives a commencement speech to graduating students.



Soldiers of the 29th Signal Battalion set up a VSC-60 at Mosul Airfeild.



ENGINEERING

22D SIGNAL WIRES MOSUL

The 22d Signal Brigade leads a joint mission with the 29th Signal Battalion, to commercial-ize Mosul Airfield, reducing required Signal assets and helping Soldiers get home



CPT Miller led the Mosul commercialization effort.

By CPT JENINE MELTON

Commercialization is the process of engineering and installation commercial off the self (COTs) equipment and hardware to provide voice and data services in order to remove tactical components and assemblages out of system. Since Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) I, Coalition forces have been trying to commercialize the Iraqi Theater of Operation (ITO) in order to minimize the deployment of tactical signal assets and Soldiers in support of theater communication requirements. 22nd Signal Brigade and 29th

Signal Battalion are working aggressively to make this dream a reality for the Mosul Airfield (MAF) by reducing the tactical presence of SENs and NCs. The MAF Area of Operation (AO) is home to the 29th Signal Battalion of Fort Lewis, Washington. Delta Company, 29th Signal Battalion TCF is currently serving as the primary HUB of all communications

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coming in and out of Mosul. “My company’s mission is to maintain tactical and commercial communication assets,” said CPT Anthony Jordan, Delta Company Commander, 29th Signal Battalion. “We are directly involved with in this [commercialization] mission with the IOM of the mission”.

“This effort is necessary for a few reasons: first, it supports the collapse of FOB Courage. As FOB Courage collapsed there would be a large base of customers without strategic bandwidth,” states CPT Nicholas Miller, 22d Signal Brigade Commercialization OIC. “Second, the commercialization of FOB Diamondback supports the Brigade’s intent to reduce the tactical presence in theater thus positioning the Brigade or 3rd Signal Brigade to potentially off ramp another tactical signal battalion”. However because MAF has more strategic implications due to the fact that is a major air-movement HUB for the Northwest, the 22d Signal Brigade engineering section

recognized that a more in-depth plan needed to be developed. CPT Miller worked closely with the ANTEON Cable Engineering and Installation Team (ANTEON CE&I Team), Data Section, and Circuits and Transmissions to engineer a plan to meet this mission requirement. According to CPT Miller, the engineering team taking a “complete picture” approach, were able to look at the task from a perspective of not only” how they could service the Mosul AO but also how they can posture MAF and Marez for Commercialization.

“The Anteon CE&I Team conducted a week long survey of MAF in order to develop a com-



Clockwise from top left: 29th Signal Soldiers install a VSC-60 satellite, An Anteon fiber technician splices fiber in Mosul Airfield, Soldiers prepare for a convoy out of Mosul.



plete backbone fiber plan in order to provide long term stability for MAF. This plan was presented to CPT Todd Arnold’s section [Data] and adjusted slightly based on his desires for the logical connectivity of the MAF LAB. I was also adjusted based on lessons learned from maintaining tactically installed fiber for three plus months in theater. Circuits and Transmissions under CPT Jillian Klug made sure the circuit bandwidth for MAF met the data and voice connectivity requirements and followed up ensuring the Request for Service (RFS), Telecommunication Service Orders (TSOs) and Authorized

Service Interruption (ASIs)”, said CPT Nicholas Miller. Since this was 29th Signal Battalion and Brigade’s first large scale project they worked closely together to develop their plan. 29th Signal Battalion providing the ground assessment for the movement of troops and the USC-60; in addition to, coordinating with the Air Force Redhorse Engineers to dig the trenches for the fiber optic installation. The Brigade engineers provided the MAF network design, and Tier 1 data equipment and configurations. The Engineering section also set representatives from the Data and circuit section,



to install the new circuits and the assist with the construction and development 29th Signal Battalion’s TCF.

The procurement of resources and shipment of those items was another contributing factor to the potential overarching success of this commercialization project. “Basically without the equipment the project can go nowhere,” states CPT Christopher Dimick, Brigade Procurement Officer. Cpt Dimick’s job was to provide 29th Signal Battalion with the equipment needed for the project and ship it to its respective location. “The Data Section configured all the

networking equipment on Victory Base prior to the massive equipment transfer conducted between CPT Dimick and the 29th Signal Battalion’s CPT Jordan,” CPT Miller states. “Overall for the MAF Mission we provide over 600k worth of commercialization equipment the equipment was used in the 4 Area Distribution Nodes (ADNs), Technical Control Facility (TCF) and Essential User Bypass (EUBs) at MAF,” said CPT Dimick. In addition to developing the Fiber Optic plan for the MAF infrastructure, The ANTEON CE&I Team lead by Eugene Oh, Supervisory Senior Engineer and Team Leader,

provided a four day Fiber training course for 20 Soldiers from Delta Company 29th Signal Battalion. “The fiber optic training class enhanced the capabilities of the Soldiers and provided a huge head start in the installation process,” said Eugene. “It was a resounding success and provided Soldiers in the field the necessary skills to properly install the fiber optic cable for the project at hand. 22d Signal Brigade provided the necessary materials, supplies and individuals to implement both the fiber optics training class and the following fiber optic installation.” According to a few key Leaders within the Brigade Engineering section, 1LT Robert Harrison, the 29th Signal Battalion LNO, played a pivotal role in the coordination of the MAF commercialization process. His efforts and dedication were worthy of acknowledgement. “1LT Harrison played a critical role,” states CPT Nicholas Miller. “He really took the 29th’s success in this effort personally and became highly involved with the coordination of all movement of personnel, equipment and misc fiber supplies.” This commercialization project definitely highlighted the multi-section coordination required between the Brigade engineering section and 29th Signal Battalion to accomplish this mission. “The team at Brigade in the engineering section is a rare blend of exceptionally technically individuals with type A personalities and a great team concept mentality. This coupled with the positive, “can-do attitude of the 29th made this project successful,” said CPT Miller. “The working relationship between our units was great I couldn’t ask for a better team,” states CPT Jordan.

TASK FORCE ADLER NCO



INDUCTION CEREMONY

Date: 27 May 06

Time: 1600 hrs

Place: Behind Building 43

Guest Speaker: CSM Ralph R Beam

Loyalty Duty Respect Selfless Service Honor Integrity Personel Courage